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SUBJECT Reversal of Position of Partido del Pueblo

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1. Colso Solano, Secretary General of the Partido del Pueblo (PP-Communist Party of Panama) stated in mid-December that the Party favors the continuation of President Arnulfo Arias in power as the most propitious means for realizing some of the aims of the common people. On 7 December 1949 (one week before U.S. recognition of the Arias Government) the PP issued a bulletin on the present political situation in Panama in which it strongly denounced "Yankee imperialism" as responsible for the ills of the Republic.
2. The bulletin was neatly mimeographed and presented a more professional appearance than previous material published by the PP. It praised the "popular masses" incorporated into the government, condemned the National Police, and accused the United States of warmongering and meddling in the internal affairs of the Republic of Panama. The following excerpts are the more important ones included in the bulletin:

"The Partido del Pueblo, the political party of the working class, is the only political party which had the courage and responsibility to take a public stand during the military movement which created a crisis in the country during November. The Party suggested the calling of popular elections as the only solution for taking the problem out of the hands of the military and self-promoters. The fly-sheet published by the Partido del Pueblo was the only responsible political document published during the conflict.

"On 24 November, the Panamanian Military, resolved to triumph, pulled aside the curtains of the last electoral fraud, placing Dr. Arnulfo Arias in the Executive Power.

"With this unexpected act, those who were formerly the opposition are now at the head of the government. By it, the majority of the popular masses have been incorporated into the government and thus create conditions for placing the Republic on a straight and progressive road, a course which must lead to the raising of the standard of living of the working class, to the giving of land to the farmers, to assuring hygienic and inexpensive living for the people, to lowering of the cost of living, to full

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compliance with the Labor Code, to respect for the National Constitution. The popular masses which surround the new President guarantee by their service and presence in the government that the country must be saved from fiscal and economic disorder; that the standard of respect due us from the government in Washington and the Canal Zone must be raised, thus contributing to the suppression of racial and salary discrimination in the Zone and to developing an effective protective policy for commerce against the commissaries and bars which operate in the Zone; and at the same time must struggle for the increase in rental of the Zone which for more than 30 years has been the same.

"The Partido del Pueblo endorses these new steps to free the Panamanian people from hunger, backwardness and unemployment. The Partido del Pueblo will contribute toward the finding and application of solutions to the problems of the workers, the farmers, the intellectuals, the progressives of commerce and industry. The Partido del Pueblo, as always, assures the people that it will endeavor to support national and international peace and will lend its help to all dignitaries without regard for their political ideologies in order to solve the crisis.

The Military Question

"The evil of militarism is so far advanced that it must be pulled out by the roots and demilitarization of the National Police imposed. It must also be said that militarism in Panama, as in the rest of Latin America, has been promoted by Yankee imperialism, by the bellicose policy of President Truman and the bare-faced intervention of the U.S. Embassy in our country.

"The Partido del Pueblo in its bulletin of 22 November stated that the demilitarization of the National Police must include the following measures:

- "1. Creation of a civil and autonomous Department of Transit.
- "2. Civil administration of jails, in accordance with the standards of penal science.
- "3. Creation of Civil Provincial Police under the Governors and the Minister of Government and Justice.

"The Partido del Pueblo has struggled and will continue to do so for the removal of Ramon, Vallarino and Flores from the positions they occupy. However, the Partido del Pueblo reaffirms that the removal of these individuals and substitution of others in their places will not bring about a solution to the grave problem of militarism which has developed in the last 15 years. It is necessary for the National Police to be demilitarized in conformity with the measures prescribed in this document by the political party of the working class, The Partido del Pueblo.

The Provoking Attitude of the Yankee Government

"In the recent crisis, the bare-faced intervention of the Department of State in our affairs was obvious to the point of attempting to fan the flames of violence. Four times, in different and contradictory terms which incited public force to general violence, the Department of State of the United States expressed opinions on the situation in Panama. The U.S. Government is not authorized, much less so by the privileges which it enjoys in Panama, to express opinions for or against the ideas or parties which are at war in our country, or about the laws and national procedures.

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"These acts perpetrated by the Government of the United States, acts of frank intervention and encouragement of violence in the national democratic manner of living, must be loudly denounced by all people of the Continent in order to put a stop to the maneuverings of the inciters of militarism who from Washington want to direct our internal policy with meddling official declarations.

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"The Partido del Pueblo, the people all, denounce the intervention of the United States in the internal politics of Panama. U.S. non-recognition of the present government is an encouragement to conspiring elements and retards the solution of the problems of the people.

"The Partido del Pueblo asks the sister Republics of America to maintain relations with the present Government and to denounce the intervention of Yankee imperialism, which under the guise of non-recognition attempts to subject our country to the malicious designs of its international policy and warmongering."

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[] Comment. Celso Solano in a radio broadcast on 25 November 1949, three days prior to his arrest for anti-government propaganda activities, called for the removal of Chief of Police Remon and President Arias.

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